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UNIÃO DEMOCRÁTICA TIMORENSE

STATEMENT

BY

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CHAIRMAN OF THE POLITICAL COMMISSION

OF UDT

BEFORE

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DECOLONIZATION

New York, 12 August 1988

Mr. Chairman

Distinguished Delegates

On behalf of the Timorese Democratic Union, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address this Committee. The issue is still important because East Timor is being illegally occupied by Indonesia.

The stand of UDT and the Nationalist Convergence on this matter is very clear:

Indonesia should withdraw its military forces from East Timor, and allow its population to choose freely its destiny. However, we do not have any illusions. The struggle for such an aim is difficult and it will last as long as necessary. Why is that so? Because Indonesia is going to use every stratagem in order to deceive the public opinion who are not so well aware, and to try to justify its military occupation.

Against such attempt we do point out that the Indonesian presence is rejected by both the East Timorese now living in exile and the entire population of our country--in such a way, that if a referendum takes place today, Indonesia will certainly be confronted by a total rejection of the integration. So we are now against a wall with Indonesian domination and occupation. We can be destroyed, but we will never bend to the aim of Indonesia

in transforming us into a people without soul and identity. We are also convinced that Indonesia knows this determination of ours not only as a political organization, but as a whole population as well.

Some significant facts might give Indonesia the assurance of this determination of ours. Indonesia has recently attempted to organize in Australia, a visit to East Timor by the East Timorese. Our people have rejected such a proposal whose aim would be to use Indonesia propaganda against us. The same attempt was made before in another Australian city and the occasion was also refused by our people.

Nevertheless, the organization of visits seems to be the tactics of the present Indonesian diplomacy. We can include in this diplomacy, the invitation made with a captious goal to the Portugeuese Parliament and to a group of European Parliamentarians.

Therefore, we congratulate the Portuguese Parliamentarians for their answer, cautiously prepared, for the safeguard of our right to self-determination. We would like to see that any visit which may take place, would also have as a condition, the recognition by the Indonesian Government of our right to self-determination and independence.

In fact, we hope that neither we, nor anybody may forget that Indonesia has committed two horrible crimes in ourcountry against our people: the crimes ofboth physical and cultural genocide.

The physical genocide has been unequivocally proven and it consists of the annhilation ofmore than 200,000 people by the Indonesian military forces. This crime has stopped for awhile due to the international condemnation, but we have serious reasons to believe that it may continue if the free world accepts the fait accompli.

On the other hand, the cultural genocide, though less known, is much more serious than the physical one. In a few years, Indonesia has eliminated many small kingdoms whose population has had cultural traditions and social structures. This phenomenon which was respected by the Portuguese colonialism, made East Timor a real ethnographic paradise in the past.

No economic development carried out by the Indonesian Government could change our conviction that only in freedom, can we be a people with our own identity: own history, political organisation and social structure.

Indonesia claimed that it has set up television in East Timor. But will this pay for the lives of 200,000 people? The present technology is so advanced that we can set up television in East Timor without such a big loss of human lives. Indonesia claims that it has built schools,

hospitals, roads, university, etc. All these can be done by the Timorese, too, with the help of the international community and bringing more benefits to our people without the cost of genocide.

In fact, there are many technicians, including those from Portugal, who are eager to work in East Timor for the development of our country and benefit of our people. We know that this wish of cooperation has been used by the Indonesian propaganda stating that we want the return of the colonialism--nothing more false. In fact, Indonesia also has Dutch technicians and for this, nobody says that Indonesia wants to back Dutch colonialism.

We would also like to stress that if we insist on Portuguese technicians, it is because Portugal has not refused its international responsibilities as an administering power, but contrary to Indonesia, Portugal has repeatedly pointed out that it does not have territorial ambitions over East Timor.

In 1974, Indonesia said that it had no territorial ambition over East Timor. But this statement served only as a pretext to invade and occupy our country and to carry out physical and cultural genocide.

We therefore have grounds to say that Indonesian Colonialism is much worse than that of the Portuguese. This feeling was already expressed in 1976, by a Timorese man of the road, who said: "If we regard the Portuguese as

colonialists, what name shall we give to our Indonesian brothers who have come here to kill, to torture, to rob, and to commit all kinds of crimes against us?"

Therefore, we should declare that the duty and right to build roads, schools, hospitals, etc., belong to the East Timorese people through its leaders. Indonesia has stated that we are in the pay of obscure interests, but this argument is against Indonesia itself. In fact anybody can ask: when Indonesia fought for her independence, was she in the pay of obscure interests? We are sure not, because any struggle for indepence is just. Then why does Indonesia not think the same way of our struggle for freedom and independence? Because Indonesia is simply assuming a position of force against all reason.

She is taking the role of the wolf which has killed the lamb by invoking all the possible and imaginary arguments. For Indonesia, we are like the lamb--small in size, economically weak and without a sufficient number of leaders. Such an argument is terribly dangerous if it is taken literally. Is Indonesia intending to eliminate all the small nations? She certainly will not do so--both because of the geographic situation and discontinuity of international condemnation.

It is such a condemnation, that we once again come to the Committee of the 24 of the United Nations Organization, and request that the violations of our peoples' fundamental rights stop. Therefore, we would like once again to stress that Indonesia has not any rights of any historical or cultural jurisdiction over East Timor.

Historically, East Timor was never a part of any political entity with Indonesia. The unity of Indonesia is a recent result of Dutch colonialism and ours is from the Portuguese colonialism which is prior to the Dutch one.

Jurisdictionally, East Timor was a Portuguese colony, declared as a non-self-governing territory and is still regarded as a territory under the Portuguese administration. Therefore, the role of Portugal as administering power remains fundamental. Indonesia has been attempting by all means to weaken all links between East Timor with Portugal. So we would like to solemnly declare that our official language is Portuguese and Indonesia should not forbid the teaching of the Portuguese language in the schools of East Timor.

Ethnically, our rich dances and traditions are originally different from those of Indonesia, mainly Java, despite some common characteristics.

Indonesia has often stated that the Timorese people are Indonesian brothers, but we have enough evidence that

this is simply a camouflage because as we have already said, Indonesia intends our destruction in order to establish new cultural patterns.

What we aresaying is not a product of fertile imagination, but simply the reality of facts. There was a plan perpetrated to eliminate as many Timorese as possible. This was already confirmed by the non-action taken for the disappearance of all those people regarded as traditional story tellers and those of middle age who could establish the link between the young and old generation.

We sincerely believe in good words of the Indonesian authorities and we hope that the international community may continue to condemn the illegal occupation of East Timor by Indonesia. We have reason to believe and hope that this will remain so, due to important recent events such as:

- USSR established an agreement to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan;
- the USA are engaged in a platform construction for peace in South Africa;
- Conversations are being held for peace in Kampuchea;
- Peace has finally been reached in the Persian Gulf.

The United Nations has played an important role in all these events through the action of the Secretary General. We do hope that the same result can happen with East Timor, provided that Indonesia recognize theright of the East Timorese people to self-determination and independence.

Actually, the resolution 37/30 of the General Assembly, adopted in 1982, urged Indonesia to hold conversations with Portugal and the legitimate representatives of the East Timorese people under the auspices of the Secretary General in order to obtain a global solution to the question of East Timor.

On our part, UDT and FRETILIN have already reached an agreement of equal footing and cooperation. This agreement is serious. Indonesia can no longer usethe argument that we, the Timorese leaders, may lead the people to kill each other again. If this happened in the past, Indonesia is the one to be blamed. Indonesia should, from now on, consider seriously the necessity of a dialogue on equal footing with the NationalConvergence set up by UDT and FRETILIN.

We, UDT, never accept a false solution under our name. We will be loyal to the spirt of the National Convergence made up by our political maturity. In fact, we know that on the other side, FRETILIN will alsobe loyal to the same spirit.

These conversations are not impossible. If they have not yet taken place, it is Indonesia's fault by not fully accepting the UN 37/30 resolution.

Mr. Chairman

Distinguished Delegates

The question of East Timor will certainly not remain an unfinished issue to history. If this were so, injustice would prevail over right; force would become a sufficient reason to eliminate those who are weaker; the Charter of the United Nations would be betrayed in its most fundamental principles, and the Human Rights would be violated in change of some benefits of propaganda.

UDT hopesthis will never take place. Justice will prevail over crime; the right will be good for both the strong and the weak; Human Rights will be defended everywhere and all violations deserve the same strong condemnation.

East Timor is a small territory. Its people have been fighting and will continue to do so for its fundamental rights of which you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished Delegates, are the legitimate protectors.

We insistently request that you may do everything to safeguard these rights.

THANK YOU.